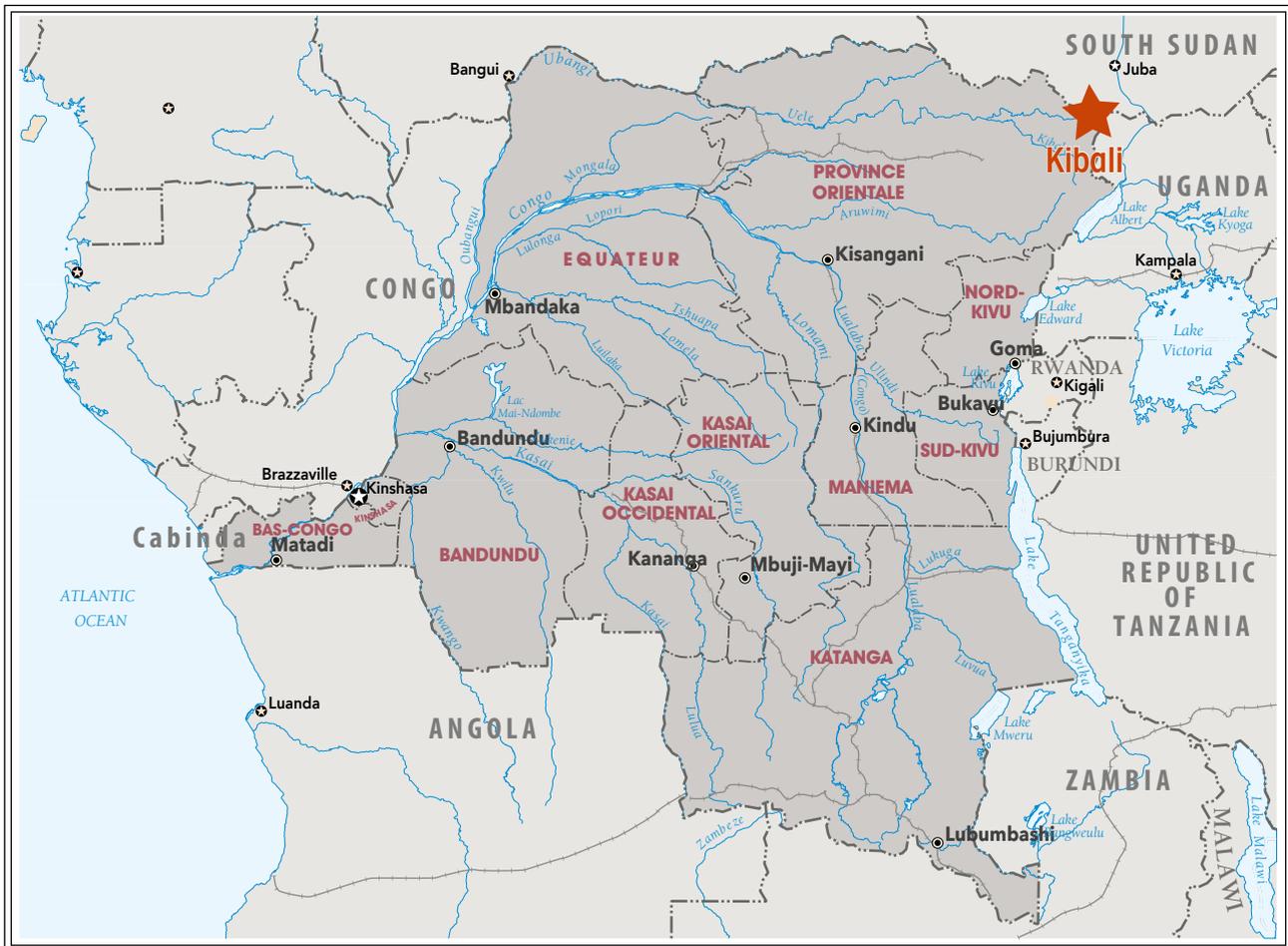


# Participatory Action Research

## IMPACTS OF EXTRACTION ON WOMEN IN AFRICA

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

#### Dilemmas of displacement for women and girls of Doko and Durba



**F**emme et Justice Economique (FEJE), with the support of WoMin - African Gender and Extractives Alliance, carried out research in July-August 2014 to document the experiences of women and girls of Doko and Durba relocated to Kokiza by the Kibali Gold Mines project. The site of the project is in the densely forested, landlocked and oil-rich territory of Watsa, in the Orientale Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

For several years, the state-owned company, OKIMO, was the only company mining gold in the area. Poor management and repeated wars led OKIMO to enter into partnership with Kibali Gold Mines.

FEJE sought to evaluate the terms of the resettlement agreement between Kibali and the local populations, the compliance with the terms of reference, including the way women were compensated, as well as the terms and conditions regarding the rehousing of communities. FEJE also aimed to assess the impact of Kibali Gold Mines investment on relocated and resettled populations, particularly women and girls.

In order to cover 19 villages and reach out to 4216 households in Kokiza, 4 researchers and 20 community investigators (working women, teenage-mothers, housewives, female sex workers and women members of women's associations) were mobilized to carry out studies in different villages.

### Results

Before the relocation, the population relied for their livelihood on gold panning, field cultivation, vegetable gardens, livestock, small businesses and the distillation of palm oil. Girls attended school in addition to completing daily household chores. Though good schools were built by Kibali Gold Mines in most of the relocation sites (some of the new schools lacking sufficient classrooms), girls began dropping out of school. This is because with the establishment of the gold mine, selling and breeding became difficult and young girls were expected to work to supplement family income.

In general, women are faced with the following difficulties:



- The loss of cultivated fields and lack of arable land in the new Kokiza sites. After relocation, women found themselves cultivating vegetable gardens on plots of land too small to feed families.
- A lack of capacity building regarding the impact of mining on women and girls.
- The lack of institutions and appropriate solutions for issues of rape, sexual abuse and illiteracy – all brought to the fore with the establishment of the mine.
- The destruction of fields and insufficient arable land for larger scale agricultural production.
- A lack of financial support, training, and education to allow women to develop new income generating activities.

It is important to underline that most women and teenage mothers rely on agriculture as their main source of income. Women are responsible for running households, including feeding and caring for the family, paying for children’s education and other family expenses. The establishment of the gold mine has in turn led to a general imbalance in the socio-economic situation of the population.

Women were not informed by Kibali Gold Mines of the terms of reference for the relocation, which was carried out before any compensation was provided to the affected populations. In an effort to overcome the various challenges arising, women have created NGOs and cooperatives but face difficulties finding partners and

obtaining funding. During one of the peaceful marches organized by the affected populations to air their demands, gun butt beatings, whippings, and tear gas were delivered by the army and police. At night in the villages, police and army personnel make threats to the relocated villagers, at times right within the homes of women. All resettlement related letters of villagers addressed to organs of the state remain unanswered. Some 35 households have not benefited from any resettlement rights and entitlements and instead face regular threats from Kibali Gold Mines.

Deprived of the means of livelihood and income, the community burden falls on girl children who drop out of school and engage in petty trade in the vicinity of the mine. This exposes girl children to sex work and ultimately, illiteracy, with direct consequences such as unwanted births, STDs and HIV-AIDS. As they are not organized under a strong leadership, Doko and Durba women and girls are not able to act effectively to assert their rights. This is why FEJE has stepped in to sound the alarm about the negative effects of extractivism in the DRC, including Kibali Gold Mines in Orientale Province. Mining and other companies must attend to their social responsibilities. FEJE has set up a network of women with the aim of breaking the silence and empowering women to claim their rights.



Investigators with a woman and her daughter who are selling millet



Community investigators mapping the research

**This participatory action research project was generously supported by the following funders:**

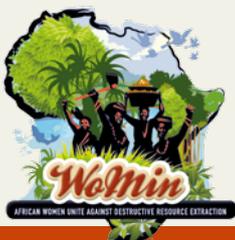
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**For the full report see <http://womin.org.za/images/docs/drc-report.pdf>**

**This research project is a collaboration of WoMin and Femme et Justice Economique (FEJE)**



**Femme et Justice Economique (FEJE)** is a nongovernmental organisation working for the emergence of a just society in the Democratic Republic of Congo based on the integration of women, respect for women’s socioeconomic rights, respect for the environment, and equitable distribution of resource based revenue.



**WoMin – African Gender and Extractives Alliance** brings together non-governmental organisations and grassroots women resisting destructive extractivism, focusing on mining, oil and gas in Sub-Saharan Africa. Established in 2013, WoMin and its allies undertake women-led research, solidarity exchanges, education and campaigns to promote development models advancing gender, ecological, energy and climate justice. [www.womin.org.za](http://www.womin.org.za)